

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

L-02 IO-10 AID-05 /079 W
----- 000107

R 071000Z DEC 74

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1455

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 0863

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, FR

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF CHIRAC VISIT

REF: BAGHDAD 848

1. SUMMARY: FRENCH AMBASSADOR BELIEVES CHIRAC VISIT WAS
MAJOR GAIN FOR WEST AT EXPENSE OF SOVIETS AND ENCOURAGED
IRAQ TOWARDS MORE INDEPENDENT AND RESPONSIBLE POLICIES.
OTHER EUROPEANS SEE IT PRIMARILY AS FRENCH COMMERCIAL SUCCESS.

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IN ANY CASE, SOVIETS DISPLEASED WITH UNPRECEDENTED

WARMTH OF IRAQ'S EMBRACE OF FRANCE. END SUMMARY.

2. FRENCH AMBASSADOR CERLES HAS GIVEN ME FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT OF NOV 30 - DEC 2 VISIT BY PM CHIRAC.

3. ON ARAB-ISRAELI PROBLEM CHIRAC REITERATED WELL KNOWN FRENCH POSITION THAT ISRAEL MUST CONTINUE TO EXIST WITHIN SECURE AND RECOGNIZED BOUNDARIES. GOI HAD EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING. CERLES SAID USE OF WORDS "ISRAELI" FORCES AND "JUST AND PERMANENT PEACE" IN JOINT COMMUNIQUE (PARA 3 REFTEL) REPRESENTED FURTHER EVOLUTION OF IRAQI POSITION. HE BELIEVES IRAQI POSITION WILL EVOLVE ONLY GRADUALLY BECAUSE GOI IS PRISONER OF UNCOMPROMISING ANTI-ISRAEL POSITION OF 25 YEARS AND SADDAM HUSSEIN MUST BRING ALONG PARTY MILITANTS.

4. ON EUROPEAN-ARAB DIALOGUE, CHIRAC HAD MADE IMPORTANT PROGRESS SINCE GOI HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN RELUCTANT TO PARTICIPATE (BAGHDAD 815). CERLES SAID FORMER FORMIN TAQA HAD TOLD HIM IN STRICT CONFIDENCE THAT MAJOR REASON FOR GOI RESERVATIONS WAS ANTICIPATED SOVIET REACTION. CERLES THEREFORE CONSIDERS IRAQ'S ENDORSEMENT GAIN FOR WEST. CERLES SAID OBSERVER STATUS FOR PLO IS MINOR QUESTION THAT CAN EASILY BE WORKED OUT. MAJOR PROBLEM, AS IMPLIED IN COMMUNIQUE, IS THAT 8 OF 9 EC MEMBERS ARE ADHERING TO IEA.

5. CERLES STRESSED THAT FRANCE SERVING AS IRAQ'S BRIDGE TO THE WEST. FRENCH CONSIDER BAATH REGIME BEST DEFENSE AGAINST USSR'S STRATEGIC DESIGNS ON IRAQ. FRENCH BELIEVE WESTERN INTERESTS BEST SERVED BY ENCOURAGING IRAQ'S NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND ARAB UNITY. CERLES SAID CHIRAC HAD STRESSED THAT FRANCE WISHED TO HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL ARAB STATES AND HAD NO DESIRE TO PLAY OFF ONE GROUP AGAINST ANOTHER. THIS POINT MUCH APPRECIATED BY IRAQIS WHO HAVE RECENTLY COME TO REALIZE POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF ARAB SOLIDARITY.

6. CERLES PLAYED DOWN NEW COMMERCIAL ACCORDS (PETROCHEMICAL COMPLEX, CEMENT PLANT, ADOPTION OF FRENCH COLOR TV SYSTEM, AUTOMOBILE PLANT, ALUMINIUM PLANT, AND POULTRY PROJECTS) BY CONFIDENTIAL

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SAYING THAT MANY OF THESE WOULD BE JOINT VENTURES WITH OTHER EUROPEANS, JAPANESE OR AMERICAN FIRMS. HE SAID PRICE AND QUANTITY OF FRENCH OIL IMPORTS HAD NOT BEEN DISCUSSED AND HE CATEGORICALLY DENIED REPORT THAT IRAQ WOULD LOAN FRANCE ONE BILLION DOLLARS.

7. AMBASSADOR CERLES' EC COLLEAGUES, WHO WERE BRIEFED BY CHIRAC, HAVE MORE RESTRAINED VIEW OF VISIT. FOR EXAMPLE,

AFTER CHIRAC HAD LAUDED POSSIBILITIES FOR CLOSE RELATIONS BETWEEN UNITED EUROPE AND UNITED ARAB NATION, FRG AMBASSADOR HAD ASKED IF HE HAD SPECIFIED TO IRAQIS UNITED EUROPE INTERRELATED TO U.S. CHIRAC HAD NOT GIVEN CLEAR RESPONSE. CHIRAC HAD ALSO NOT RESPONDED TO QUERIES ON POSSIBLE FRENCH ARMS SALES. ITALIAN AMBASSADOR AND BELGIAN CHARGE BOTH SAY FRENCH ARE GRABBING AS MANY NEW PROJECTS AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT SLIGHTEST CONCERN OR COORDINATION WITH EC PARTNERS.

8. SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN DIPLOMATS ARE OBVIOUSLY DISTURBED BY IMPLICATIONS OF CHIRAC VISIT AND UNPRECEDENTED IMPORTANCE GIVEN TO IT BY GOI. AT RECEPTION DEC 6 TWO SOVIET COUNSELLORS QUEUED ME (SIC) ABOUT FRENCH ARMS SALES AND OTHER ASPECTS OF VISIT.

9. COMMENT: FROM FRENCH POINT OF VIEW VISIT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN ENORMOUS COMMERCIAL SUCCESS AND SHOULD FURTHER ENSURE THEIR POSITION AS IRAQ'S LEADING SUPPLIER IN 1974. FRENCH CLAIMS OF GAINS FOR WEST SHOULD NOT BE REJECTED OUT OF HAND. NUMBER OF ARAB AMBASSADORS HAVE SUGGESTED THAT GOI EXAGGERATED WELCOME FRO CHIRAC TO INDICATE TO OTEHR WESTERN EUROPEANS THAT IF ONLY THEY TOO WOULD ADOPT POLICIES CLOSER TO FRENCH, THEY COULD RECEIE SAME FAVORED TREATMENT. FOR IRAQ, AND PARTICULARLY SADDAM HUSSEIN, VISIT WAS PRESTIGE TRIUMPH. FOR USSR VISIT DEMONSTRATED AGAIN IRAQ'S DETERMINATION TO PURSUE INDEPENDENT POLICIES.
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